Rideauwood
ADDICTION AND FAMILY SERVICES

2025-2026 COMMUNITY REPORT



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A Message from the Board President and Chief Executive Officer



Jennifer Ellis
Board President



Carole Sinclair
Chief Executive Officer

This year has been one of reflection, transition and continued progress for Rideauwood.

As we approached the conclusion of our 2022–2025 Strategic Plan, we took time to consider not only how far the organization has come, but also how the environment around us continues to change. What became clear was that the strategic directions guiding Rideauwood remain both relevant and necessary. In March 2026, the Board of Directors approved a two-year extension of the plan, giving us a strong foundation to continue evolving while staying focused on the needs of our clients, families and community.

That spirit of evolution has shaped much of our work this year. We have strengthened access to French-language services, deepened partnerships and explored new ways of working collaboratively, including the potential for a voluntary integration. Initiatives such as the pilot Substance Use Health Program partnership with CHEO demonstrated what is possible when organizations work together to create more coordinated and responsive care.

This year also brought an important leadership transition, with Carole stepping into the role of CEO in January 2026. Through that change, we have been continually reminded of the strength of Rideauwood's staff, management team, Board of Directors and community partners, whose commitment has helped maintain both continuity and momentum.

As we look ahead, our focus is on building on what is working well while strengthening how we measure, understand and improve our impact. This includes implementing measurement-based care, reviewing referral pathways and improving how we collect and use data to support thoughtful, evidence-informed decisions.

As Rideauwood enters its 50th year, we do so with pride in the legacy built over five decades and gratitude for the people and partnerships that have made that work possible. Looking ahead, our focus remains on ensuring that the values, expertise and commitment that have defined Rideauwood continue to strengthen substance use and mental health care in our community for years to come.

Together in Community,
Jennifer & Carole



Vision

Healthy
Connected
Community

Mission

To provide person-centred treatment, prevention and education to those affected by substance use, addiction and mental health issues in Ottawa and the surrounding region.

Values

Quality
Respect
Compassion
Accountability
Equity and Diversity

Land Acknowledgement

We, the staff and leadership of Rideauwood Addiction and Family Services, acknowledge that we work and live on the unceded, unsurrendered territory of the Algonquin Anishinabe Nation whose presence on this land reaches back to time immemorial.

With an ever-increasing awareness and understanding of the historial oppression of lands, cultures and Indigenous Peoples in Canada, we commit ourselves to the journey of decolonization and reconciliation.



Highlights

Connecting Care: The CHEO Substance Use Health Program Pilot

For a young person experiencing a substance-use crisis, asking for help is only the first step. Too often, what follows is a complicated path of referrals, wait lists and appointments with different organizations.

For one year, the CHEO Substance Use Health Program (SUHP) offered a different approach. Developed through a partnership between CHEO, Rideauwood, Kids Come First, and Le CAP, the pilot provided more coordinated, accessible substance-use care for youth aged 12 and older who presented to CHEO's Emergency Department or mental health services with substance-use concerns.

Rather than sending a young person home to navigate the system on their own, the SUHP created a pathway from hospital care into ongoing community-based treatment. Youth could meet with a Rideauwood counsellor, receive immediate support, learn about their treatment options and decide what next steps felt right for them while still connected to CHEO. Those who wanted continued support could transition into outpatient counselling, while psychiatric support and case coordination helped connect youth with additional care and community resources when needed.

"The SUHP cut out many of those wait times and allowed for a full wraparound care model that made it possible for youth to be seen faster and see many health discipline professionals in a collaborative manner."

Connor Matthews, Rideauwood Youth and Young Adult Counsellor



The program was intentionally designed around the needs of youth and families. People with lived and living experience, including young people and parents, helped inform its development. Their feedback reinforced the importance of counsellors who were trauma-informed, flexible, and grounded in harm reduction, an approach already central to Rideauwood's work.

Support also extended to families. Rideauwood's family and parent services were available in more complex situations, allowing parents to receive guidance and counselling alongside their child's treatment. Through the partnership with Le CAP, French-speaking youth could also access French-language counselling directly, further reducing barriers to care.

Although the pilot's dedicated funding came to an end, its impact did not. Young people who were partway through treatment were able to remain connected with their Rideauwood counsellors, and the relationship between Rideauwood and CHEO continues.

"This pilot program showed what's possible when hospitals and community organizations work together. Youth had a team around them, making it easier to access care and much harder to get lost between services."

Ayesha Ghouri, Manager of Youth and Young Adult Services

The SUHP pilot was small in size but ambitious in its goal: to make it easier for young people and their families to get the right help at the right time. It offered a compelling glimpse of what youth substance-use care can look like when the system is built around those who need it.



Alexandra Fortin, Le CAP; Tamara Schindeler, Kids Come First; Dr. Tea Rosic, CHEO; and Ayesha G., Rideauwood, at the Addictions and Mental Health Ontario conference, where the partners shared their collaborative hospital-community model for supporting youth experiencing substance-use concerns.

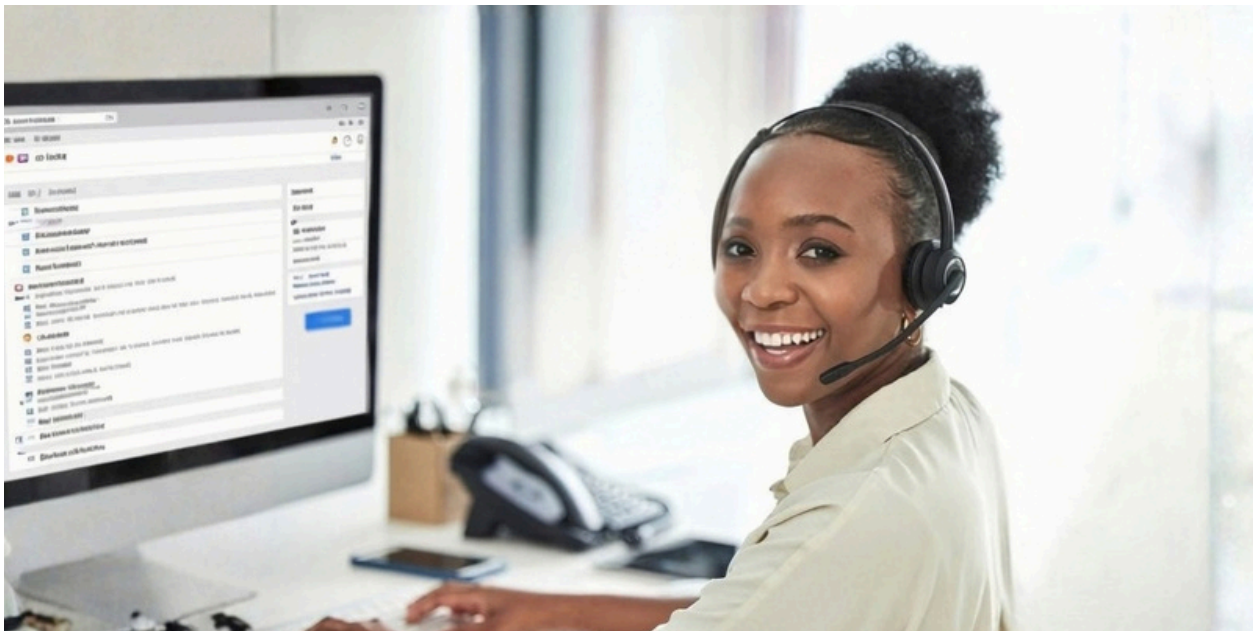
Strengthening Access to French-Language Services

This year, Rideauwood joined organizations across the region in adopting Winning Strategies for Serving Francophones, an initiative designed to strengthen the active offer of French-language health and social services.

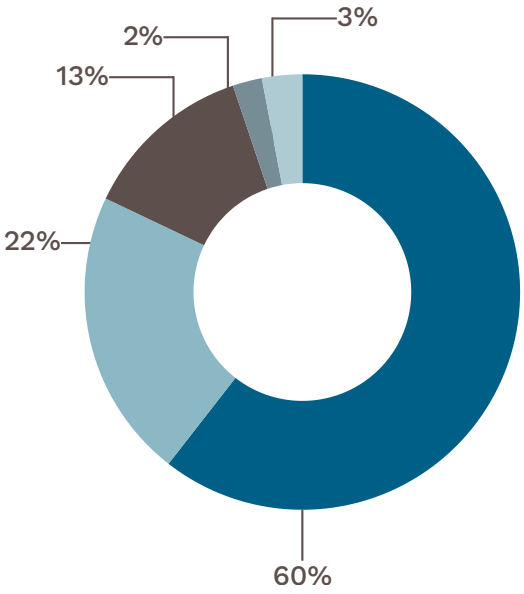
For Francophone clients and families, being able to communicate in the language in which they are most comfortable can make an important difference. It can support clearer communication, greater understanding and increased confidence when accessing care.

Through the Winning Strategies initiative, Rideauwood has taken steps to make French-language services easier to identify and access. The approach encourages organizations to build awareness among staff, identify French-speaking employees and clients, strengthen connections and referrals to French-language services, and measure progress over time.

Participation in the initiative reflects Rideauwood's ongoing commitment to equity, accessibility and person-centred care. By reducing language barriers and making the availability of French-language support more visible, we can help ensure Francophone clients and families are better able to access services in a way that meets their needs.



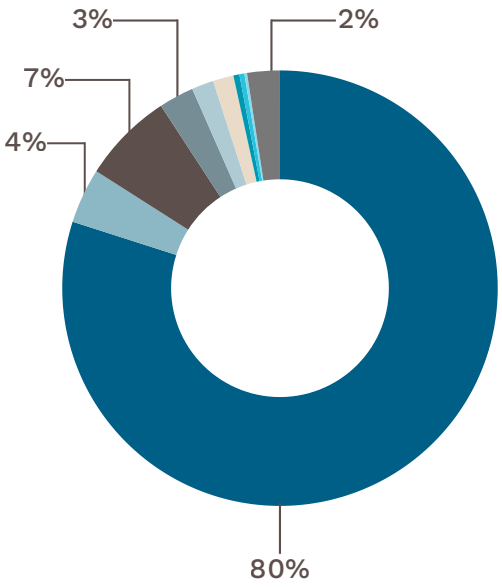
Finanical Statements



REVENUE

- Grants and Contributions ..... $ 2,820,383
- Program - School Based ..... $ 1,003,030
- Program - Fee for Service ..... $ 595,046
- Donations ..... $ 101,580
- Interest and Other ..... $ 139,047

Total $ 4,659,086



EXPENSES

- Salaries, Benefits & Consulting ..... $ 3,709,096
- Occupancy Costs ..... $ 189,719
- Equipment and Supplies ..... $ 314,225
- Professional & Membership Fees .. $ 120,750
- Office & Communications ..... $ 75,779
- Recruitment & Training ..... $ 71,085
- Travel ..... $ 20,542
- Insurance ..... $ 17,312
- Advertising & Promotion ..... $ 9,196
- Voluntary Integration ..... $ 112,362

Total $ 4,640,066

Our Impact



8,840 one-on-one sessions provided to **1,201** registered clients.



10,215 youth attended presentations and education sessions in schools.

3,151 clients participated across **599** groups or outreach sessions.



88%

Clients seeking treatment for problematic substance use, gambling, gaming or technology use

12%

Family members seeking treatment regarding someone else's gambling, gaming, or other compulsive behaviours

58% of clients are 26 years of age and older.

42% are under the age of 26.

40+ Rideauwood counsellors deliver

15 programs designed to meet each client's needs and goals.

Rideauwood clients receive support tailored to their individual needs, meeting them where they are at.

Programs

Adult Programs

Rideauwood's Adult Programs support people aged 26 and older who are looking to make changes related to substance use, gambling or other addictive behaviours. Grounded in a harm reduction approach, services meet people where they are and support self-determined goals, whether that means reducing use, working toward moderation or abstinence, or improving overall health and quality of life.

Through individual and group counselling, clients have opportunities to better understand their experiences, develop practical strategies and make changes that reflect their own circumstances and goals. Rideauwood also provides immediate individual counselling for eligible adults experiencing acute substance-related concerns, helping people access support when they need it most.

For adults experiencing problematic gambling, Rideauwood offers group-based education, support and treatment, with individual counselling available to participants who need additional support. Across all Adult Programs, counsellors work collaboratively with clients to address the interconnected impacts that substance use, gambling and mental health can have on their lives and wellbeing.



Drug Treatment Court

Rideauwood provides specialized therapeutic support for individuals whose substance use has contributed to involvement with the justice system. Through the Ottawa Drug Treatment Court (DTC), clients receive tailored treatment and support designed to help them meet both their therapeutic goals and legal obligations.

Youth & Young Adult Programs

Rideauwood's Youth and Young Adult Programs support young people aged 12 to 25 who are experiencing challenges related to substance use, behavioural addictions or associated mental health concerns. Recognizing the unique pressures young people face, counsellors work collaboratively with each client to understand their experiences and develop personalized goals that support their health and wellbeing.

Through individual and group counselling, youth and young adults can explore the role substance use is playing in their lives, build coping skills and develop strategies for positive change. Grounded in a harm reduction approach, services support self-determined goals that may include reducing substance use, working toward moderation or abstinence, and improving overall quality of life. Immediate individual counselling is also available for eligible youth experiencing acute substance-related concerns.

Rideauwood also provides specialized support for young people whose circumstances may create additional barriers to care. The Youth Justice Program works with youth involved in the justice system, while partnerships with organizations including St. Mary's Home, CHEO, A New Day and Youville Centre bring counselling directly into settings serving pregnant and parenting youth, youth with complex needs, and young people who have experienced sexual exploitation or trafficking. Across these programs and partnerships, Rideauwood focuses on building skills, knowledge and resilience while creating supportive pathways toward greater stability and wellbeing.



Families & Parent Programs

Rideauwood's Family & Parent Programs support parents, partners, family members, friends and other support people who are affected by a loved one's substance use, behavioural addiction or related mental health concerns. Recognizing that these challenges can impact the entire family, programs help participants better understand addiction, its effects on relationships and family systems, and the role they can play in supporting both themselves and their loved ones.

Through education, group programming and individual counselling, participants develop practical coping strategies, strengthen communication and learn approaches that can reduce the impact of addiction on their own wellbeing. Programs such as Family Spiral, SMART Recovery for Family and Friends, and Family R.E.S.E.T. provide different levels of support, from introductory education to longer-term counselling and skill development.

Across all Parents & Family Programs, Rideauwood's counsellors work collaboratively with participants to build understanding, confidence and healthy boundaries, empowering them to care for themselves while navigating the challenges of supporting someone they love.



Program Goals

PSYCHOEDUCATION

Education programs are tailored to different client groups, and they explore the “hows” and “whys” of problematic substance use, behavioural addictions and related mental health issues. These programs also offer options for healthy ways to cope.

PREVENTION

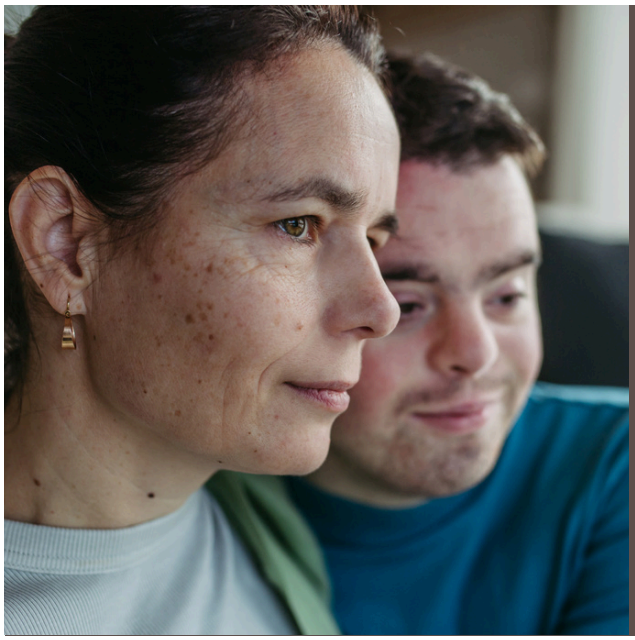
Prevention program participants receive resources and tools to increase their resilience.

HARM REDUCTION

Rideauwood programs empower clients to set goals to reduce harms and to enhance skills and knowledge in order to improve their health and wellbeing.

ABSTINENCE / SUBSTANCE FREE

Clients who choose to eliminate their substance use or gambling altogether develop a program path to achieve their goals.



91%

of clients who completed the 2025-2026 Ontario Perception of Care Tool for Mental Health and Addictions (OPOC-MHA) survey agreed or strongly agreed with the statement:

“The services I have received have helped me deal more effectively with my life’s challenges.”

Building a Healthy, Connected Community

Donate



Many Rideauwood donors have been touched by problematic substance use, addiction, or mental health challenges in some way. Others don't have a personal connection, but care deeply about their community members in need.

Please visit Rideauwood.org and click the DONATE button to help people access care and live well.

Share Your Story



Testimonials by clients and alumni help Rideauwood to build awareness and inspire generosity. If you would like to share your Rideauwood experience with others, please let us know. When sharing your lived/living experience, Rideauwood respects the level of anonymity that is most comfortable for you

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Subscribe to Rideauwood's email newsletter, follow us on social media, and share our posts.

@RideauwoodOttawa

Together, we can strengthen the Rideauwood community you care about and help it thrive!





Rideauwood
ADDICTION AND FAMILY SERVICES

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